

# Pear Sawfly or Pearslug

Scientific Name: *Caliroa cerasi*

**Hosts:** Pear, cherry, plum, quince, apple, cotoneaster, mountain-ash

**Damage/symptoms:** They are not actually true “slugs” but are closely related to a wasp. The damage is quite distinctive, showing a skeletonizing effect on the leaf surface. They can cause browning of the leaves, premature leaf drop, and reduced fruit size/production the following season.



Figure 1. Pearslug larvae on leaf. Photo by J. Payne, Bugwood.org.



Figure 2. Pearslug damage on peach leaf.

**Life cycle:** Adults emerge in late June to July. Females lay eggs on the upper surface of the leaves. The larvae feed on the upper leaf and drop to the soil to pupate. A second generation of adults emerge within a couple of weeks. The second generation can often be more damaging to the leaf tissue.

**Management:** Pearslugs can be washed off with vigorous jets of water. Wood ash or dirt thrown on the slugs will help to dry them out and kill them. There are several contact insecticides labeled for chemical control including horticultural oil, neem oil, or a product with the active ingredient spinosad (products such as Captain Jack’s, Monterey Garden Insect Spray), carbaryl (products such as Sevin), or malathion.

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